



LOS ANGELES COUNTY COMMISSION FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

Celebrating 26 Years of Advocacy & Achievement

COMMISSIONERS

Patricia Curry
Chair

Susan F. Friedman
Vice Chair

Steven M. Olivas, Esq.
Vice Chair

Stacey Savelle
Vice Chair

Carol O. Biondi
Ann Franzen
Dr. Sunny Kang
Helen A. Kleinberg
Dr. La-Doris McClaney
Rev. Cecil L. Murray
Sandra Rudnick
Adelina Sorkin, LCSW/ACSW
Martha Trevino Powell
Dr. Harriette F. Williams

APPROVED MINUTES

The General Meeting of the Commission for Children and Families was held on Monday, **September 20, 2010**, in Room 739 of the Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration, 500 West Temple Street, Los Angeles. **Please note that these minutes are intended as a summary and not as a verbatim accounting or transcription of events at this meeting.**

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT (Quorum Established)

Carol O. Biondi	Rev. Cecil L. Murray
Patricia Curry	Steven M. Olivas, Esq.
Ann Franzen	Sandra Rudnick
Susan F. Friedman	Stacey Savelle
Dr. Sunny Kang	Adelina Sorkin, LCSW/ACSW
Helen A. Kleinberg	Martha Trevino Powell
Dr. La-Doris McClaney	Dr. Harriette F. Williams

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT (Excused/Unexcused)

There were none.

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chair Curry at 10:07 a.m.

II. INTRODUCTIONS

Self introductions were made.

III. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

- **September 20, 2010**

Commissioner Sorkin sought clarification on the election process regarding the presentation of the Nomination Slate and the Election of Officers being held at the same Commission meeting.

Mr. Don Ashton stated that in past years, the Commission conducted the presentation of the Nomination Slate at a meeting prior to the meeting at which the election of officers took place. However, he noted that in reviewing the Commission's Ordinance and Bylaws, presenting the slate of officers and conducting elections at the same meeting is not prohibited, as long as the procedures are agreed upon by the Commission. If any

500 West Temple Street, Hall of Administration, Room B-22, Los Angeles, CA 90012

Phone: 213/974-1558 Fax: 213/625-5813

www.lachildrenscommission.org

Commissioner objects to the current process, they can make a motion to present the slate of officers today and continue the election to the following meeting.

Action Taken:

On motion of Commissioner Kleinberg, seconded by Commissioner Savelle, the agenda for September 20, 2010, was unanimously approved.

IV. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

- **August 2, 2010**

Action Taken:

On motion of Commissioner Murray, seconded by Commissioner Williams, the August 2, 2010 minutes ([copy on file](#)) were unanimously approved, as submitted.

- **August 16, 2010**

Action Taken:

On motion of Commissioner Biondi, seconded by Commissioner Murray, the August 16, 2010 minutes ([copy on file](#)) were unanimously approved with the following correction:

Page 6, Under "Action Taken"

Ayes: Commissioners, Friedman, Kleinberg, Rudnick, Trevino Powell, Williams, and Curry.

V. CHAIR'S REPORT

Chair Curry reported the following:

- The Commission welcomed Dr. Sunny Kang, who was appointed to the Commission by Supervisor Knabe on August 3, 2010.
- Commissioner Biondi will host this year's Commission Annual Retreat at Homeboy Industries in Los Angeles, on October 4, 2010.
- Commissioner Sorkin was selected by the Department of Mental Health (DMH) as a member of the DMH System Leadership Team (SLT). Congratulations were extended to Commissioner Sorkin by the Commission.
- The ICAN Nexus 15th Year Anniversary "*Violence Within the Home and its Effects on Children*," Training Conference is scheduled for Thursday, October 28, 2010. The Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) will cover the costs associated with attending the conference for five Commissioners; however any Commissioner wishing to attend may do so at his/her own expense.

- Chair Curry and Commissioner Olivas attended a meeting with County Counsel Andrea S. Ordin, Assistant County Counsel Andrew W. Owens and Principle Deputy County Counsel, Christina A. Salseda who is the new Counsel for the Commission

The Commission welcomed Ms. Salseda, who looks forward to working with the Commission in achieving its mission and goals.

- The Annual Report is close to being finalized. Comments or suggestions regarding the report should be made prior to the Commission's Annual Retreat scheduled for October 4, 2010. The Commission's input is greatly appreciated; however, it should be noted that it is difficult to incorporate differing ideas and opinions.
- It has been almost one year since the Executive Office began staffing the Commission. The Commission thanked staff for their support and hard work.

Action Taken:

Chair Curry's verbal report was received and filed.

- **Recommendation to cancel the October 4, 2010 Regular Commission Meeting and Schedule a Special Commission Meeting.**

Action Taken:

On motion of Commissioner Williams, seconded by Commissioner McClaney, and unanimously carried, the recommendation to cancel the Regular Commission Meeting and Schedule a Special Commission Meeting was approved.

The next Regular Meeting of the Commission for Children and Families will be on Monday, October 18, 2010 at 10:00 a.m.

- **Recommendation to Establish an Ad-Hoc Mental Health Workgroup for Issues Affecting Children and Transitional Age Youth (TAY).**

Chair Curry reported that the Workgroup's focus will be on issues affecting children and Transitional Age Youth as well as monitoring how the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) funds are spent and what outcomes are achieved. Commissioner Friedman will Chair the Workgroup and Commissioners Curry and Kleinberg will Co-Chair. Additionally, Commissioners Sorkin and Trevino Powell will be part of this workgroup collaborative. The first meeting is scheduled for October 13, 2010. Additional information will be forthcoming.

Commissioner Biondi recommended that the Department of Justice's (DOJ) recommendation to increase mental health services to Probation Camp youth be included in the workgroup's focus.

Action Taken:

On motion of Commissioner Sorkin, seconded by Commissioner Kleinberg, and unanimously carried, the recommendation to establish an Ad-Hoc Mental Health Workgroup for Issues Affecting Children and Transitional Age Youth (TAY) was approved as amended by Commissioner Biondi to also include the DOJ's recommendation to increase mental health services to Probation Camp youth to its focus.

VI. COMMITTEE REPORTS

**Presentation of the 2010-11 Commission
Nomination Slate and Election of Officers**

Martha Trevino Powell

Nomination Chair, Trevino Powell reported the following 2010-11 Slate of Officers for the Commission for Children and Families:

- Chair: Patricia Curry
- Vice Chairs: Susan F. Friedman, Steven M. Olivas, and Stacey Savelle

Action Taken:

By common consent and there being no objection, the 2010-2011 Slate of Officers was unanimously approved.

Following the tally of election ballots, Nomination, Co-Chair McClaney reported the following officers were unanimously elected:

- Chair: Patricia Curry
- Vice Chairs: Susan F. Friedman, Steven M. Olivas, and Stacey Savelle

• Childhood Wellness Committee Status Update

Childhood Wellness Committee (Committee) Chair, Sorkin reported the Committees' name was changed from the Childhood Obesity Committee to the Childhood Wellness Committee in July 2009. The Commission was also chaired by former Commissioner Tina Pederson who resigned from the Commission in December 2009. She further added the following:

- The overall prevalence of childhood obesity for Los Angeles County is at 23.3 % based on an October 2007 Los Angeles County Health report. Percentages of childhood obesity vary significantly based on geography, from a low of 4% in Manhattan Beach, to a high of 37% in Maywood. Higher prevalence of obesity is found within communities that have a higher poverty rate, lower educational attainment and more dependents.
- In November 2007, at the New Beginnings Conference, Pediatricians were concerned with children under the care of the DCFS who are prescribed psychotropic medication, and many subsequently gained 60 pounds within a six month period as a result of the medication.

- The Committee participated in Judge Nash's *Childhood Obesity and Psychotropic Medication Workgroup*, and in the DCFS' Workgroup on obesity. Subsequently, the Commission forward recommendations regarding need to develop strategies to address childhood obesity to the Board in December 2008. In April 2009, the Board voted to create a policy to address Childhood Obesity.
- The Committee, in the latter part of 2009, decided to work collaboratively with the Faith Based and Relative Care Committees. These Committees, together with the DCFS (Kinship Division), the City of Pasadena and Los Angeles County Public Health Departments, and First 5 LA hosted six Community Wellness and Healthy Lifestyles trainings for Relative Caregivers. The goal of these trainings was to improve the dietary and physical activity behaviors of participants thus promoting the development of healthy lifestyles.
- The following faith-based facilities generously donated their space and six training were conducted:
 - St. Andrews Catholic Church (SPA 3) – December 12, 2009
 - Calvary Baptist Church (SPA 7) – February 25, 2010
 - Van Nuys Seventh Day Adventist Church (SPA 2) – March 18, 2010
 - Trinity Baptist Church (SPA 6) – April 29, 2010
 - Temple Knesset Israel (SPA 4) – May 6, 2010
 - Grace Chapel Church (SPA 1) – May 20, 2010

At the conclusion of the trainings, participants were able to: identify the health risks related to a lack of a healthy lifestyle, and read/apply the MyPyramid Food Guide to make better choices when grocery shopping.

- At the August 30, 2010, Committee meeting, the Probation Department and the DCFS provided status reports of their respective department's strategy to comply with the 2005 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Nutritional Guidelines.
- The Probation Department is currently revising its menus for Camps and Juvenile Halls. The Committee was informed that juveniles have the right to file grievances regarding the food that is being served through Probation Department's Ombudsman.
- In March 2010 DCFS revised its Procedural Guide *Nutrition and Physical Well Being and Health*. Training on this protocol is currently taking place.
- The Committee recommended that the Probation Department nutritionists track what food is being thrown away. It is also recommended that DCFS considers adding a section to the DCFS Wellness Policy regarding children under the age of five since more than 30% of children under the care of the department fall within this category.

- DCFS invited the Committee to attend the *CHILDHOOD OBESITY: A Call To Action* Event held on September 10, 2010 at the University of Southern California (USC). This summit was organized by USC in cooperation with members of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, Congressional Black Caucus and Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus. The Tri-Caucus pointed out that the new landmark health care law, the Affordable Care Act, includes a number of important tools for fighting and reversing the rise of childhood obesity. The summit attempted to lay the groundwork for future policies, and focused on mapping out the issue and discussing solutions.
- The Committee will continue to monitor the status of strategies to address compliance with the CDC Nutritional Guidelines. In the future we will also be looking at other wellness issues such as mental health, education, asthma, and dental care.
- When we started our work we were successful in bringing to light the need for County contracts to reflect the need to change language from the 1999 guidelines to the 2005 guidelines. We hope that the various departments will now incorporate the 2010 guidelines in future contracts.

In response to questions posed by the Commission, Commissioner Sorkin added the following:

- Juveniles taking psychotropic medication must receive approval from the Juvenile Courts prior to prescribing and making any changes. In addition, a recent change now requires height and weight information to be recorded when a change does occur.
- Presiding Judge of the Juvenile Courts, Judge Nash is not only concerned about obesity, but weight in general, such as children who fail to thrive.

Action Taken:

By Common Consent, Commissioner Sorkin's report was received and filed.

VII. PRESENTATIONS/DISCUSSION

**California State Assembly Bill 12 (AB 12) Beall
(California Fostering Connections to Success Act)**

**Mitch Mason, Chief
DCFS Government Relations**

Mr. Mason provided the Commission with a presentation regarding California State Assembly Bill 12, California Fostering Connections to Success Act ([copy on file](#)) and potential policy changes to DCFS.

In response to questions posed by the Commission Mr. Mason added the following:

- DCFS will participate in California's development of regulations. DCFS policy will reflect those regulations.
- The Governor has until September 30, 2010 to sign AB 12, and there are good indicators that he will sign prior to the deadline.

- There are no indications within AB 12 that will require the County to pay for college expenses.
- Relative Caregivers will continue to receive their current basic rate to care for foster care children, AB 12 will allow that funding to continue until the nonminors 21st birthday.
- DCFS and the State will have to review the continued relationship that social workers develop with children in foster care as they grow to adulthood. However, it takes a certain set of custom skills when working with nonminors that is not present when working with younger children.

In response to questions posed by the Commission Ms. Leslie Starr Heimov from the Children's Law Center added the following:

- AB 12 specifies, that the nonminor can petition from anywhere within the State. The court where the nonminor resides would then forward that request to Los Angeles. Additionally, the nonminor can participate over the phone and would not be required to travel to Los Angeles. There is no specific language within AB 12 that says the social worker must be from the jurisdiction where the nonminor resides.
- There is no provision for marketing this new option to youth who have recently aged out or will age out soon.
- There is a recognition that THP Plus in its current form would still need to exist, as not every youth may want a County social worker, the courts and the lawyer back in their lives. THP Plus will continue to exist as a standalone program.
- In addition, AB 12 offers Supervised Independent Living Program (SILP) which will provide social workers and nonminor's additional funding for housing opportunities that was not available before. The housing would not have to be licensed, just as long it is approved and supervised by their case carrying social worker. However, the term "supervised" is used loosely, for example, if a nonminor is housed in a college dorm, supervision could mean sending the social worker his/her transcripts verifying registration.
- AB 12 co-sponsors have been working closely with the California Department of Finance who adjusted their fiscal analysis last week and determined that AB 12 was cost neutral. AB 12 will not affect the Financial Aid status for nonminors attending college.

Action Taken:

After discussion, by Common Consent, Mr. Mason and Ms. Heimov's reports were received and filed.

VI. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Director Ploehn reported the following:

- DCFS made the following managerial changes which will be effective as of October 1, 2010:
 - Rhelda R. Shabazz has been promoted to Deputy Director over Administrative Services. Her first assignment has been to prepare the Department for the upcoming audit. DCFS is working with the CEO's office in trying to identify an outside auditor.
 - Bryce Yokomizo, Lisa Nunez, and Trula Worthy-Clayton are retirees who have been re-hired on a limited basis to provide DCFS with additional assistance.
 - Harvey Kawaskaki is assigned to function as the new Division Chief of Youth Development Services.
 - Marilynne Garrison is assigned to function as the new Division Chief for Community Based Support.
 - Angela Parks-Pyles is assigned to function as the new Regional Administrator over the El Monte office, the Asian Pacific Islander Program and the American Indian Program.
 - Ed Sosa is assigned to function as the new Regional Administrator over the Pasadena office.
- The Emergency Response (ER) referrals have been reduced by 1,100 in the last eight weeks. Additional staff has been placed to further reduce the number of referrals back down to zero.

Action Taken:

After discussion, by Common Consent, Director Ploehn's verbal report was received and filed.

VII. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was none.

VIII. ANNOUNCEMENTS

There was none.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned by Chair Curry at 11: 57 a.m.